

A  
DISCOURSE  
OF  
COURAGE,  
Wherein it is made known according to  
TRUTH,  
AND THE  
REAL NATURE thereof.

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*The Law shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many People, and rebuke strong Nations afar off; and they shall beat their Swords into Plowshares, and their Spears into Pruning Hooks.*

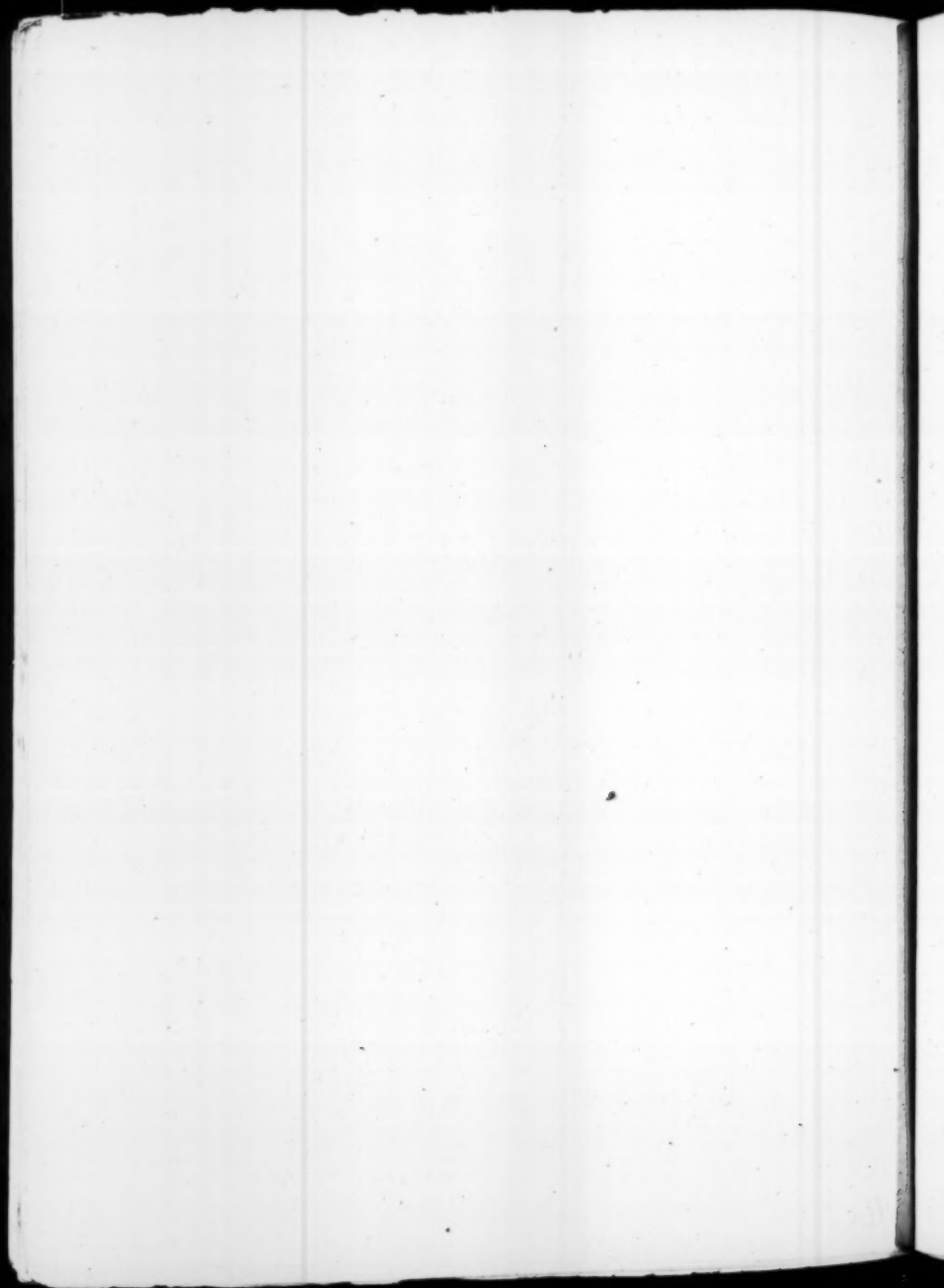
*Nation shall not lift up a Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more. But they shall sit every man under his Vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid: For the Mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it. Micah. 4. 2, 3, 4.*

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee; He is just, and having Salvation, lowly, and Riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt, the Foal of an Ass.*

*And I will cut off the Chariot from Ephraim, and the Horse from Jerusalem, and the Battle Bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak Peace to the Heathen, and his Dominion shall be from Sea to Sea, and from the River even to the end of the Earth. Zech. 9. 9, 10.*

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*A General Preface to all the Kings and Rulers  
of the Earth, and the great Men, and the  
rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the  
mighty Men, and to all inferiour Officers  
and Souldiers, and to People of every Sort  
and Condition.*

**E**Very Discourse should be so fitted and applied to Persons, Times, the several Places and Countreys, that it may have some effect upon them: And it is our Duty (as we would at the last Day be judged Honest and faithfull) endeavour to manage that wherewith we are intrusted, that it may doe good, and prove succesfull unto the End for which it is designed. But though it comes to pass, (through the exceeding subtilty and the continued Resistances of Satan, as also that Spirit of Disobedience, by which he acts in the Children of Men,) that works of this Nature do meet with the usual Return, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my Strength for nought, and in vain, Isa. 49. 4. yet we have hope and strong assurance, That He who now letteth, shall be taken out of the way; but his worst and greatest letting is towards the last: the others, as reasonable Creatures, may thus conceive, which way is most likely to please and find acceptance with that God with whom we have all to doe; and from whom, Every One, whether Male or Female, must receive eternal Reward or Punishment; for the word of God, spoken or written, is stedfast, and remains with him. And every Transgression and Disobedience receiveth a just recompence of Reward. Even now he looks down from the height of his Sanctuary: from Heaven doth the Lord behold the Earth. He understands our thoughts afar off, and is acquainted with our Secret Imaginations; He hears all the mutterings and hard speeches, and turns the cunning devices of them who would hinder his Word from going forth; and according as it is more or less diffused and spread, do either despise or conceal it, or are stubborn and rebellious, or would slander and defeat the Purpose and intent thereof. But let People know, The Lord reigneth, and themselves should tremble and be Obedient at his Word; but not strive to prevent it in the first place, and afterwards refuse to hear and receive it, least he deal with such as Enemies;

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*mies, who would not have him Reign over them: And when he who sitteth between the Cherubims, would shine forth; As for those who would extinguish or stop out his Light, It is justly to be feared that such shall never come into the presence of the Father of Lights; but are to be cast into utter Darkness. Whatever is delivered by immediate and Necessary consequence from scripture, will be fulfilled. Truth is God's, and bears his Image and Superscription: And who despises the one, will be despised himself. If People do stamp the King's coyn under foot, or are wilfully resolved not to receive it; He will resent and punish the affront. The Lord and Governour of the World, will not suffer without Punishment himself to be contemned by a small number of Grasshoppers, or Worms of the Earth, who are as nothing in comparison of him.*

*As his Kingdom and Dominion doth extend over all; so the following Words of his Truth are not Calculated only for one particular Countrey or Island, but for all Nations, and the vast Continent of the whole Earth, That they may be all at Unity, Peace and Concord. That Christ the Word of God, may bear rule over every Nation, Countrey, and Language. Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it and to Establish it with Judgment and with Justice, from henceforth even for ever. The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this, Isa. 9.7. In his days shall the Righteous flourish, and abundance of Peace, so long as the Moon endureth. He shall have Dominion also from Sea to Sea, and from the River unto the ends of the Earth, Yea all Kings shall fall down before him; all Nations shall serve him. He shall spare the Poor and Needy: He shall redeem their Soul from Deceit and Violence, and precious shall their Blood be in his sight. Ps. 72. 7, 8, 14. This should be thoroughly considered by all the Kings and Rulers of the Earth, and also they should use their utmost care and endeavours to doe the like; for the Lord (the Creator and Preserver of Mankind) will make Inquisition for blood. He remembreth them: He forgetteth not the Cry of the Humble. God is judge himself, and he will determine concerning all the Blood which hath been shed on the Earth, or the Sea; it will be seen and known at whose hands all these Things shall be required.*

A DIS-

# A DISCOURSE OF Courage, &c.

**T**O bring People out of the wrong and mistaken apprehension of Things; and to help somewhat to their Good, it will be necessary to explain what *Courage* is, and how it promotes their Happiness. Many excellent things have we heard of this Virtue; but still as to the true and particular nature thereof, most are ignorant, extolling they know not what, they know not wherefore. Neither shall the due Estimation thereof be lessened, so it be justly and exactly stated, as it is for the security and well being of Mankind. For even the Devil *who was a Murtherer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth* makes use of this Temptation to insnare and beguile Souls unto himself. Man, who is little and despicable by Nature, yet though the Pride of his Heart is taken with nothing so much as what looks great: To despise Evil, and laugh at Fears; not to value our own Lives; but to run on with a certain blindness, and hurry towards the Land of Darkness; not to regard the worst things that befall the Souls of Men, or threaten worse afar off; all this and much more, *Satan, who deceives the whole World*, hath gotten to become fashionable, and be generally received for Courage and Magnanimity amongst the *Inhabitants of the Earth*, though it tends to Wasting and Desolation. And thousands, deluded with this false Imagination of Things, come to dye as Fools. They did not mind the things which we told them; as a Man is cheated of himself, (and that but once for all eternity) even so are they; who so pass through this World, as if certainly there was an end of them, and no more. Their doings turn upon this Point, Whether there be an Immortality, and Resurrection, which themselves neither absolutely disallow, nor consider of; as if the Mercy was left to to be led hoodwinked, or be deluded by a Trick or Stratagem to be suddenly clapt fast into Prison, shut under Hatches, or thrown into a dark Dungeon; when if they had seen and known before hand, they had utterly avoided it. What vast multitudes have been cut off before their time by unnecessary Wars, Duels, Revenge, and many more by the Murthering Sins of Gluttony, Drunkenness and Uncleanliness? All these make a shew of Courage and Bravery. Tush! They are not afraid of Death, nor of what may be afterwards: They would not seem concerned for these Things. This their way is their Folly, for which is prepared Punishment; but by the Men of this World it is esteemed Gallantry of Spirit, a noble Resolution, a worthy Temper. What if upon a strict Scrutiny it should appear to be Falshood, Madness, and Mafery? Strip them of their Armour and Habilliments of War, look underneath, and we shall see dull and inconsonant Souls, (properly called *Bulls, and the Calves of the People*, Pl. 63. 30.) under the Vizard and Shew of Courage.

For that, according to Truth, consists in the middle, between Fear and Boldness. It is miserable and foolish to fear where no Fear is. It is an even hinderance, and keeps off from obtaining good; and therefore true Religion drives away all this. So on the other hand, to thrust ones self upon Evil, is meer Rashness; for it proceeds from ignorance and Inconsideration of things; and that is a foolish Boldness, like the Men that ride on to fight to the Battle. Or if they have a little foresight, and will dare on through Life or Death, this is Folly. For when a wise Man takes in hand he first debates within himself, whether the Good he shall gain will be greater, and weigh down the Evil he shall submit himself unto. Whether the killing of himself or others, which perhaps he hears not, or if he doth, would but slightly affect him; yet this will not make an amends for the loss of an immortal Soul, or for such a lasting Pain: If he goes further, to give up his Life, for a Pretence, by not having made Preparation before, (as command) such is the Cruelty of the Devil, that he will plunge him self into that *desperate uncertainty of the soul's Health*, for a great and faint Commendation in time? And here they will be taken long about, but themselves will be still in doubt, and with Anguish condemn them thus, for that they sought to be applauded in this.

This is to be applied to such People, who frame to themselves wrong Principles of Action, if Men would cease from making themselves miserable. But when they are set aright, as in obedience to God, this same Thought and Consideration will move them on; for there the promised and assured Good is more than the Evil expected unto, as may be further shewed anon.

Things ought to be so stated and made known, that there may be less Lye, and more Truth, that reasonable Creatures may not be deceived with a Shadow and Appearance only, but lay hold of the real Happiness, that forgoing the false, they may learn the true Courage. Unless it be guided by Wisdom, it brings not Good, but Harm unto Men.

Something we these stand in opposition; for a wise Man is seldom courageous, because he quietly perceives the Danger, and thence with means to prevent, or not to expose himself; which is contrary to what is commonly called and esteemed Courage.

But if we consider that Establishment and Disposal of Things which God hath fixed, how they are exactly fitted for this *Life of Trial*, and *future Reward*, there is a wise and wonderful Agreement and Connexion between them all. Pleasure and Pain are the two Hinges on which all our Actions turn. God, whose Thoughts are not as ours, though it takes a contrary method to be glorified in his Creatures, by requiring them to go against what they are commonly inclin'd unto: His Commandments are made up of Negative and Positive, what he forbids, and what he commands. In the first is a semblance of Pleasure, and that is to be refused; in the other is a show of a kingly, noble's, and Evil, which is to be chosen and got over. He is the Executor of our Conscience's, and Evil, which is to be chosen and got over. He is the Executor of our Conscience's, and for it is necessary to keep the Commandments: *Beware therefore ye are courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Law of Moses, that ye turn not aside from to the right hand or to the left.* John 23.6. So of whatever is commanded by Christ in his Gospel.

Who hath farther manifested an exceeding Reward, and precious Promises, which shall certainly be fulfilled. These things indeed are not seen, and therefore the worldly Men knoweth them not; but they stand upon the same Truth as Religion doth. If our Work and Labour for the Lord should be in vain, it is much more lost Labour to sit up early to eat the Bread of Carefulness, or to follow after any worldly Design and Enterprise; for that, we see as I know, do but shortly perish and come to nothing. *The Fleavens and Earth shall pass away, but the Word of God shall not pass away and all be fulfilled.* And it is evident within our selves, there are Desires and Faculties which reach farther

farther, and are capable to seek after greater Things than the greatest here. There are vast Powers of Soul, both to will and to do, and there is somewhat provided answerable for them; for they were never put in to no purpose. All those generous and heroic Actions in resisting Evil, and following Good, are more than labouring for the Wind, an empty short Applause, which vanishes with the Breath that gives it Being, and a sufficient compensation for them. Most commonly they have not so much as this; for indeed the fashionable Piety and *Hypocritical Holiness* may be highly esteemed amongst men; but the sincere acts of Goodness, that real for God and approbation of ones self unto him only, the opposing Corruption, meet with Dishonour, Hatred, and evil-Report from the World: So the more excellent Things have no present Encouragement and visible benefit, and there is need of much Resolution to perform them: For the Difficulties and Disadvantages are seen and felt, but the Crown is afar off, above the Clouds, and not to be seen with mortal Eye. Faith makes it as certain as it seem: A noble satisfaction, of Mind, that will not be shaken nor terrified with present Hardship and Inconveniences, which is to be learnt by Diligence, and exerting itself in lesser Acts before, puts upon doing of those things which are necessary to the obtaining thereof. Set your Heart to this, that all God's Revelation is true, and then be steadfast, immovable in doing thereafter. *Add to your Faith Fortitude.* 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6. Implying a real Persuasion that these things are so, an unshaken Resolution of Soul, which is not afraid of any Amazement, and goes not rashly on, but understands what he doth; this makes up Christian Courage, which differs from that according to the World: For this is after a little temporal Good, the other in pursuit after a great and eternal one. The utmost here is uncertain; for many labour after what they do not receive: and if they do, it signifies not much when had, and fades away. But to us he is faithful that promises, if we indeed strive and perform the Condition. It is worthy of our Thoughts, being that we have not full Satisfaction, which shall not be taken from us, nor we from that. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life:* It is reserved in the Heavens for us. Many of them (would God they were more) perform the Work he requires of them. We all depart hence, and shall find whether he will fulfil his Promises, for which we have his Word and his Oath, *are immutable Things, in which it is impossible for God to lie.* Certain it is, that those several Designs of Pleasure, Riches, and Honour, are little, unsatisfactory, pass away, and come to an utter end. When our selves act upon probable, yea, assured, great, and rational Principles, others have nothing but the Multitude and common Practice to recommend them; how then comes that wide difference of the Actions of Mankind, many being led away by the worse, as appears by the least Reason and Discourse, and themselves find at length by sad and too late Experience? The Apostle, in the aforementioned place, after summing up the Christian Graces, saith, *But he that loveth these things is blind, and cannot see afar off.* 2 Pet. 1. 9. He is wholly taken up with present and sensible Things, which lessen his Eyes down to the Earth, and hinder looking up: Whereas they were made to look upwards as well as downwards, to see afar off, as near at hand: His Understanding was given to apprehend things to come, and make reflexions upon the past, to conceive and know things proper for her, to purpose and follow after an end which is worthy, and not still to be deluded with the vain Fancies and Opinions of the People. There is nothing which is seen, and commonly practised among Men, but may be made an Argument for God and Religion. Limited in the ordering of things hath been pleased to establish it so, that Men might have greater Motives and Exhortations to come unto him, and be left more inexcusable if they do not.

As for those of a generous Temper, who are acted by a sense of Honour, who pretend unto Courage, and greatness of Spirit, in their proposed ends they rub through Difficulties, and go on still. If we examine them in their very nature, upon what grounds of Probability they are undertaken, these are long in expectation. They do many things for what is a voice and nothing else, or a Rattle which they know not how soon may be taken from them, or they run it. Or those delectable things which expire suddenly like Lightening, or leisurely as the dim light of a Candle, which gives a faint Refreshment, but wearsome; which onely provides against a continued Darkness of Soul; and of all these there must be an absolute deprivation for evermore. There cannot be used too slighting comparisons to manifest how short these things come of the true Happiness of Men, which also are of his own Invention and going after. But if he would doe the same that God hath set before him, in compliance with the divine Will, what others do out of their own; use the same Constancy, and be contented to live by Faith and Hope, as they do by Expectation; not sink under a little doubting as they go on, notwithstanding their Disappointments; then he may accomplish the whole Warfare on Earth. In all steps of the Christian Courage let him be fixed and tallied with that of the Psalmist, *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait on the Lord. P. 29. 14.* There is much need of it in performing these several Acts of Duty, in resisting the Allurements of sensual Pleasure, and the assaults of Evil; to chuse Labour, and what is like unto it, to Fight and Blood; to take up the Cross, suffering Reproach and Persecution; to be subject unto Hatred and Solitudes; to incur the displeasure and evil Intreaties of Men, rather than to be carried away by them in sinful Compliance; to constantly speak out the Truth, and thereby to draw an Hatred and ill-will: all which might be declared by these Acts of Exercise and Disobedience; which he will not admit of, who is fully resolved to please God. There are many things which will faithfully exercise Courage to go through with, and overcome, when his Good shall be evil spoken of. His fixed Purpose not to offend, shall be called Honour; What are the Effects of Faith and Love shall be reputed Ignorance; to own ourselves against all bad Speeches; not to be affected of the Faces and Frowns of Men; not to be shaken with the blast of the Tempest; to adhere universally unto the Will of God, rather than to doe what others would have; and farther, *not to lose their Lives with dishonour*, entertaining it in the most terrible and afflicting manner; and many other Instances might be named, whereby holy Men of God live and do act valiantly; not to be frightened but willingly sustain Evil and hardships; to doe worthily for God and his Glory, against all Opposition of the Will and Powers of Darkness: Yet, the several Acts of the Christian Life are more properly Courage, than is to be found in these generous Actions, according to the Definition of the Word. A wise Man, in what he takes in hand, proposes what God will come off. Now he that doth not think the Recompence of Reward from God is as high, excellent and worthy to be sought after as a little Honour, worldly Profit, or Rest; it is hard he doth not understand nor believe it. There is no good here to be had without Payable of Labour; so it must be in the Things of God. There must be a striving, *working out of Salvation*, of this Difference, which is more awkward and unpleasant to the Flesh, than to the Dominion and Esteem of the World.

Yet this is not esteemed Honour amongst Men, but on the contrary is scorned and despised. It is no matter what they think, but what God will judge at the last. Their Service will doe none, or a very slight good, but his Approbation is Life and Happiness. This must be at length asked and opened; they shall be thoroughly distressed, and laid before the view of all; and then they will appear contrary to what they doe now. The Thoughts of all Hearts shall be revealed and made known; then private



Judgments shall be discovered against what they seem now outwardly to commend; the close and hidden acts of the Mind shall be brought to Light; that Hatred and Averseness to God shall be manifested, which was the Cause of their Contempt, sullen Silence, or speaking evil of the Things pertaining to him. That wilful and affected Ignorance, That partial Knowledge, of considering one side, and resolved Obstinacy not to go further, That Self-conviction, heretofore stifled, shall break forth, and then will appear another Face of Things. What shall at last be fully disclosed, would somewhat even now, if Men would suffer a particular Examination out of the Word of God, the very Truth and Reason of Things: Christianity will evidence it self to be greater Courage than what passeth for it in the Judgment of the World. Which is sign of the more restless Spirit, that both foresees the Evil and subjects it self thereto upon assured and beneficial Grounds, as did the Martyrs, Confessors, and Godly Sufferers; or those who go on with a certain Violence, without Knowledge and Consideration, as did others? Who can lay down their Lives with a deliberate Choice, retaining their perfect Reason and Sence; or those in a sudden Passion and heat of Blood, who are pushed on by Malice (like a spurred Horse leaping down a Precipice) or foolish Pride, who make themselves half Devils, and then go on not knowing what they do. But consider all the Circumstances of the Christians acting and suffering, and his Courage will be found more real and eminent. *Through God he doth valiantly*, Psal. 68. 12. *Whole Grace is sufficient*, and inspires him with an Heart to overcome all Difficulty and Danger.

Now that according to the World, if thoroughly surveyed, will be reduced very low: For abstract that Disposition of Children and Mad-men, who are not sensible of the Danger, and therefore dare rush upon any Thing. If they be neither Fools nor Blind, as not to know nor see the Truth. If their Souls be not rendered Earthy through Sensuality, and so fear not; If they are not quite stupified, when the Heart is become *as the necker Millstone*, which doth not tremble, because it hath no sense. If they have no need of Wine, or strong Liquors to support: If all Disguise and Hypocrisy could be discovered, and their concealed Fears seen, when big Words make a shew of the contrary, and are used as an Artifice to hide them: Take away all outward Advantages and Helps, and they will be as other Men. Keep them from the Ouse of a continual and immoderate Eating, let them renounce the assistance of a strong Drink, observing only the just Rules of Temperance, and then see, Whether their Courage will not grow faint and languish. Were that predominant thing of Pride rooted out, which makes them endeavour to rise their Fears, when they would be brought back to the common Nature of Mankind, which they would lift up themselves above by the aid of the aforesaid Things. We see evidently, when they fall, they are the same as others. As in Sickness, or a sober approach of Death; but more certainly when their Souls are stripped naked, and sent into the other World. No mention is made of their Courage in that Place. *And the virgin Mary in Monb at that day, shall be as the Heart of a Woman in her Pangs*, Jer. 48. 41. Men are generally the same: There may be some little Degrees of difference, yet they are all but Ash and Sift. The Lord is the Maker of them all. He hath not made some to be Men, and some to be Gods; some with Fear, and some without; but this Plant is implanted into all, and ordered so, that it may be improved or abused, corrected or perverted, besting this Life of Trial. But the Wicked strive against God; They would expel that

out which he hath placed in, which they cannot but do as far as lieth in them; for which they cannot utterly extinguish, they endeavour to hide and trifle, *Sans* for the Lord of His himself, and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread. Isa. 8. 13. and to that end all Fear was put into Men. But if they do not Fear him, this is not their Courage, but Ignorance and Forgetfulness of whom they Fear not. And then for them making a shew not to value Death, no more do Sheep going to the Slaughter: For these Men just know, they shall die, yet they mind no more what shall come of them afterwards, than those dumb Creatures passing on the Road do think of what we know shall befall them. Can those reasonable Souls indeed rush into the other World, who cannot hear a true Report thereof in an Airy sound? Can they indeed step forth upon the dark Mountains, who cannot see a Map thereof in Paper and Ink? They too lightly build up their Confidences, and in common Vogue would pass for Men of Valour, because they can slight and Contemn Religion.

But stand to it, for you are challenged into the Field, and try whether ye do not betray Cowardice herein? What if it should be said? Ye that can hear Drums and Tumpers, the roaring of Canons; yet the *Voice of God* ye cannot endure to hear, which is full of Majesty, and shaketh your Heares. When he Thundereth in the Air, It will make them quiet and still; (Psal. 8. 2.) but when he speaketh from Heaven, when he sendeth his Waters through a Pipe, or gives Life to a dead Letter, this ye have not Courage enough to receive or read. Ye set at naught and despise his Ordinances when they are not rightly managed; ye can smile at the flat and insipid Discourse of Ignorant and Unfaithful Teachers, (Hol. 6. 5.) but not at those who both Understand and do as they should. You that not will be Out-hectored, yet ye are Frightned with Wounds; a true Proof that they are not Vain, but both True and Significant. You seem not to value Swords, nor Spear, yet ye dare not contest with the Rod of his Mouth; and who seem so Resolute and Unshaken, still ye cannot endure the Beasts of his Lips, Isa. 11. 4. What is lighter then that, yet when God is pleas'd to use the meekest Thing, it can make the stoutest Oak of Bashan tremble like to the Leaves of the Forrest. Gather your selves, O ye mighty, and try to shew your Courage; which if you can, you also will, for the great Importance and Necessity will press you forward, if you have so much Power to get over all this. Can you sit for a while and tremble under God's Word? Will you admit of a second Hearing, and not be Frighted with Felix to put it off to a more convenient Season? Are you able to stand before him who fights with the Sword of his Mouth? Who Wounds that he may Heal, who Condemns that he may Justify; who as the Prophet speaks, *Says the Wicked*, casting them down that they do not come again; but for those who are not so fearful to run away, (as Christ would have none to be so) he will not shew himself always thus Terrible unto them. Stand but the first shock and then you are Men. It is only in Order to bring you unto Conviction, to be humbled under the Mighty hand of God, and then this Dreadfulness will go off, that you may serve him with Reverence, and Godly Fear. 'Tis Pusillanimity, and a more exceeding Fearfulness, that keeps Men off, even in those who would be thought to have the contrary: For could they attend unto the Word of Exhortation, bear for a while a little Irksomeness and Sorrow; had they Resolution to do some Things contrary to corrupt Nature, and undergo a little Hardship in the Service of God, as others do for their Prince; if they would

suffer a short dulness of Spirit, as they go on, through Fears and Cares for their Earthly Sovereign, then the Blessed Work would begin, continuing in Obedience and Godliness. And Courage would carry them through all the Stages of the Christian Life. It is as well employed this way as to get Honour, a great Name, and advance his Fortune. It is as valuable a Thing for the Righteous to be had in Everlasting Remembrance, as to be Slain in the Field, knocked down under the Walls of a City, buried in the Rubbish, affording Talk thereof for Two or Three Days, and so be utterly forgotten. *The Inheritance Incorruptible, Undecayed, God has Promised; That Honour which shall be to those that Honour him*, do remain, when all their Riches and Renown are expired and gon. If it is not so, let them accuse us as false Witnesses, who from God's Word, and Spirit, have Testified of these Things. If they have Fought the good Fight, and the Crown is not given them, let me be found One of the Imposters upon the World; let them suspend their Censures and Frowns until then, and I cheerfully submit to the great Event of all Things.

Certain it is, the Courage according to the World comes to nothing, with all the Castles built in the Air, the Phantastick Projects, those Devices of Man's Invention, *The Rumors, Strife, and Commotions of War*, that Domineering, being Great and Terrible; all these are Bubbles of a little longer continuance which break and dissolve into Nothing. *Fenced Cities turn into ruinous Heaps*, and these in process of Time are so changed, that they are not discernable from common Earth, but by a small Hillock or rising of Ground, we know not what it means. Those goodly Armies, that once looked so Big and Blustering, so Stately and of large Extent, yet after the Day of Slaughter they are thrown into a common Pit, and all their Carcases will not amount to so much as an ordinary Pile of Faggots. *Their Name and Memorial is perished with them, as Natural brute Beasts made to be taken and destroyed*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. or rather worse, in that they go about sowing Death till they fall themselves; a parallel of which cannot be found in whatever lives upon the Earth besides. What pity is it, That we who are as Angels of God, knowing Good and Evil, yet should act such Thing? As if we were not otherwise subject to Affliction and Calamities, but we bring more upon our own Head. Who can refrain to burst forth into Tears for the Folly and Misery of Mankind, that foregoing such Excellencies &c Worthy Principles, they should take up with Base and Destructive Ones. God hath shewed them a way how they should exert their Valour and Activity for Noble and assured Ends, to take his Kingdom by Violence. All the mean Acts are as reasonable and praise Worthy, as in Conquest of the Kingdoms of the Earth. When they are called up to the Heaven of Heavens, which are so exceeding Great and Eternal, as may be seen by the outward Courts, yet here they scramble for a few Mole-hills, which are quickly overthrown and turned into Dust or themselves before. In the Christian Warfare there is no Flating one another, all are Contenters, and there is room enough in the Celestial Mansions for Ten thousands times more than all the Inhabitants of the Earth; yet here they continue to kill and slay, not out of Necessity, as we do Beasts for Food, but to gratify Pride, Ambition and Revenge, to Disposses them who have more Right then themselves, to turn them out of the World because they would not make way: This is Gallantry and Honour, a strange way to Immortality (as those of Old foolishly imagined) to butcher, here

here, and by cutting off before the Time to make Mortality more Mortal. What Fancies doth *Abaddon*, the Destroyer, infill into Men? Surely he Laughs and Smiles ( if we may suppose that of the Internal and Accursed Spirit ) to see poor Mortals do the Work themselves, and of their own accord fall a Prey into his Teeth. Let none say, This Evil is from God, for he hath no Pleasure in the Destruction of the King. He maketh Wars to cease unto the End of the World, He breaketh the Bow, and cutteth the Spear in *fund.* He burneth the Chariot in the Fire, *Psalm* 45. 9. Rebuke the Company of Spear men, the Multitude of the Bulls with the Calves of the People, till every one submit himself unto pieces of Silver; Scatter thou the People that delight in War, *Psalm* 68. 30. The Stout hearted are spoiled, They have slept their Sleep, and none of the Men of might have found their Hands. At thy Rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the Chariot and Horse are cast into a dead Sleep. Surely the Wrath of Men shall praise thee: The remainder of Wrath shalt thou remain, *Psalm* 76. 5. 6. 10. And he shall judge among the Nations, and shall rebuke many People, and they shall beat their Swords into Plowshares, and their Spears into Pruning Hooks: Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more, *Isaiah* 2. 4. to *Micha.* 4. 3. 4. *Zech.* 9. 10. with all the other parallel Places that it be yet fulfilled, God hath Promulg'd such a Law to the World, that if it was obeyed, There would be no Wars nor Fightings among us, but they come from *Mens Lusts*, *James* 4. 2. Ambition and Revenge are the great Excendiaries, which spring from him who would be like the most High, and thence fell from Heaven: And therefore continues Hatred against God by withdrawing as many as he can from his Obedience. It is his Employment to trouble *Earth*, *de self* and infill into the Hearts of Men all Things that may do Hurt. *Lamentation* observed of his Times, and they now continue the same, That to kill or bring into bondage free People, the more they did of, fight, spoil or murder, Men would account themselves more Noble and Eminent: And being taken with a shew of *war* Glory, put the Name of *Virtue* to the greatest *Wickedness*.

This may be interpreted to weaken the Hands of the Men of War, *Isaiah* 38. 4: But it is only what is agreeable to the Laws of God and Truth; which set up the Happiness of Mankind, as going back from them is Destruction and Misery. Reduce all Mens Transactions and Affairs to their Good, that whatever makes for it, may be followed; and what doth not, may be taken away, for that tends to the contrary. There is no indifferency in Things, such as are said to do neither Good nor Harm; for they do one or the other, either Save or Destroy. We know who came on the first Errand, the Prince of Peace Whom God hath raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour. So he is to all those who Obey and Entertain him. But upon

refusal of Subjection to his Laws comes in the other of course, who hath his Name *Apollyon*. These two Divided the World. The one hath honest Meaning, which should still put it self forth. Satan to keep up his Kingdom hath all the Tricks, Devices, cunning Deceptions to beset poor Mankind, representing such Glorious Conquests, such Fame and Briskness; and secretly lets forth Religion as Dull and Regardless of any Thing, fit for little and narrow Souls, it Emasculates the Spirits, making Men Fearful and Despicable.

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The doubt lies, whose Affections are carried towards the more Noble End. The one is for Heaven and Eternal Things, the other for Earthly and Temporal; the one for what comforts in Hope and Expectation, being most satisfactory in the End; the other is concerning what breeds Restlessness, Regret and Disappointment. The one is for what hath all Safety, and real Good to Men; the other hath nothing but Uncertainty and Evil.

If Christianity were Universally observed, there would be no Sword nor Spear to be seen throughout the World. There is no harm in this. But now it is only by some and not by others, thence do arise Wars and Fightings, yet whatsoever Kings will go according to the Direction of the Gospel (as it is at their Peril if they do not, for they also are under the Jurisdiction and Sentence thereof) must engage in no War at all but Defensive, or for Reparation of great Injuries, and that all fair Means used first. *It is be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men, R. m. 12. 13.* Some are such Enemies to Peace, that when we speak to them thereof, they make them ready for Battle; so they are to be brought over this way. Here one Excellent Religion suffers it for the Wickedness and Baseness of itself, *After wars in God-pleasing, are men to be held in with their old Bricks, Mal. 32. 8.* And when they break out, they are to be tamed with Whip and Scourge. Those Primitive Christians, who fought under Heathen Emperors, did so as valiantly as others. We have heard of several Armies of the Religions that have acted more Worthily by the Grace and Fear of God, without Drunkenness, Incontinence, and Ill belief, as who have went upon these Principles. The Objection is concerning Fear of the other World, but that is taken away; for any Man may by Well-doing make the Promises of God applicable to himself, and he is in a Warrantable calling, as *Job. Baptist* resolved. So if we must die one time or another, it is as good first as last with the assurance of his favour, unto whom *all Flesh shall come.* This should make them more Courageous, for they are upon certain Grounds. But for those Church's ones, I admire how they can be Courageous, unless Stupid and made Blind the ways before mentioned; for they being subject to Evils from the World to come, it is a marvellous Policy to beguile that they fall in, before they took any Care to prevent, or were thoroughly put in Mind of them. It must be Barbarous and a Siding with the Deceiver of Mankind, to contrive on set purpose to keep them Ignorant, and, as they think, for the better Accomplishment of a present Design to suffer so many to go into Eternal Misery. Whereas if Care be had to instruct them aright in the Know- 2 Sam. 10. 12. ledge and Obedience of God, then they would have well- 1. 2. 23. 6. grounded Hope, and they are under his Blessing and Protection, who is the Sovereign Disposer of all Events of War.

As Health is the greatest Good to the Natural Body, so is Peace to the Publick. It is better to have a constant Health, but when interrupted by Sickness, than a proper Remedy is seasonable to restore. So in this World of Sin, and Confusion, it is better to prevent the mischievous Effects at first; but when they break forth, they must be Suppressed again, which may be *closed up and mollified with Ointment*, instead of the severer Remedies.

'Tis those corrupt Seeds of Evil within us that breed all the Disturbance throughout the World ( which are not so much to be seen in Beasts, and we the more excellent Creatures might have been without them also, but God is to be Glorified in our Tryal and Obedience. ) Now what takes off from the Mixture of them, what doth heal and removes, this doth Good to Mankind: Which begins with the Causes and removes them; such are Ambition, Revenge, Covetousness, and Oppression; as the Direction of God's holy Word to heal this.

There are only against Religion and Reason, whose Ways are condemned by it. *The chief Captains, and mighty Men,* and such who love to fish in troubled Waters, will smile at this Discourse, and say, *It was never well with the World since so much arguing came in.* Why, evil and irregular Actions are for want of Prudence and due knowledge; either not thoroughly giving way to it, or then not being guided thereby. *Therefore my People are gone into Captivity, because they have no Knowledge.* Isa. 5. 13. *But by a Man of Understanding and Knowledge the State of a Land is prolonged.* Prov. 28. 2. If Sin and Passions did bear all the Sway, the compass of the whole Earth would be a larger, *Bedlam*: And they that dwell therein must be chained up in several Cells or there would be no living amongst Men. Even those Nations which know not God, have some Dictates of the Natural Law concerning Good and Evil, and also Reason, by which they frame Rules and Orders of Government; otherwise it were not possible for any Kingdom or Community to stand. *Counsel is mine, and sound Wisdom, I am Understanding, I have Strength; By me Kings reign, and Princes decree justice. By me Princes rule, and Nobles, even all the Judges of the Earth.* Prov. 8. 14. 15. 16. The lesser Degrees are necessary, much more is an higher Improvement design'd to Mankind. Which advances further than to carry on the *course of the World*, or to secure Men in their Respective Rights and Possessions. But it leads them up to the knowledge and favour of God, thence to partake of his Sight and Bounty; raises their Apprehensions from little vain temporal Things, to those which are Great, Eternal and Perfect, and at last inflates them theewith. Which sits before them Things altogether worthy of humane Nature. To climb up the everlasting Hills, to fight with those three Legions of Enemies, the World the Flesh, and the Devil: To march through Difficulties and Oppositions. To be loathen with Spoils and get Ground; all these are fit exercises for a Man. It is said, Nothing is hard to him, but he dares break through all Things: Then in this shew thy Honour and Renown, Gird thy Sword upon thy Thigh. O most Mighty; Be not afraid, nor discouraged; Thou hast the Grace of God for assistance; and as long as thou putteth forth thy Strength together with that, thou wilt go on Prosperously and Victoriously.

But how is all this Hardship reconcileable with present Happiness? Very well; and he that knoweth it not, either doth not consider or not understand the Nature of Things. We love to have some Opposition, and rejoyce to get over it. It is more satisfaction to resist than to yield unto a soft Temptation; for to that succeeds Repentance and Vexation; but for what looks Uncouth and Frightful, yet resolutely to grapple therewith, and subdue it, there follows a blessed Approbation and Complacency of Soul. In all acts of Temptation, when it is comple'd with, and thoroughly put forth, it is always found True, *Greater is He that is in you than He that is in the World.* And this holds

holds firm throughout all the Steps of our Christian Warfare; but when it is all accomplished at last, there is such abundance of Comfort, that it may be better conceived than it can be expressed. That pleasant looking back upon past Labours, that sweet reflection on what he hath done and suffered in the Service of God, the Pain and Irksomeness are over: The more hath been undergone, there arises a greater Perfume, making way for a greater Reward. The Memory thereof is so delightful, that if he were to lye down in the Grave, and be no more for ever; yet *it is enough to have lived according to the Will of God*, who will deal yet more Bountifully.

Tell me, O ye Sons of Men, that have loved Vanity and sought after Leasing, That have Fought pitched Battels to get Fame and Honour, when you come to stand upon the Confines of this World and the next, Can ye call to Mind with Joy and Comfort for what he have done? But ye Christian Souls can bear Witness to this Thing: Ye that have set your selves against every Enemy, and hated every false Way; Ye do not Repent of what you have done. Ye are more pleased with it than if ye had conquered Kingdoms. Ye wish that ye had done better. Ye have cleaved unto the Lord with full purpose of Heart, Not terrified with your Adversaries, Hypocrites and Unbelievers, who have tried to beat you off, the Suggestions and Resistances of Satan, and your own Flesh, yet by the help of your God you have passed through these Tents of your Enemies, and in all have come off more than Conqueror. What Triumph and Exaltation must it be just as the Soul is sifted out of this Place of Conflict, and presented before the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of Israel, to receive his Acceptance, and the Congratulation of those, who a little before had done the same Things. O blessed Day, which opens into Immortality! Where he will be always Praising and made Happy, for ever! How should this stir up others to do the same? The whole being comprised in this, To believe, and to do. The Apostle furnishes us to both in two Words, *Add to your Faith Virtue.* 2 Pet. 1. 3.

F I N I S.